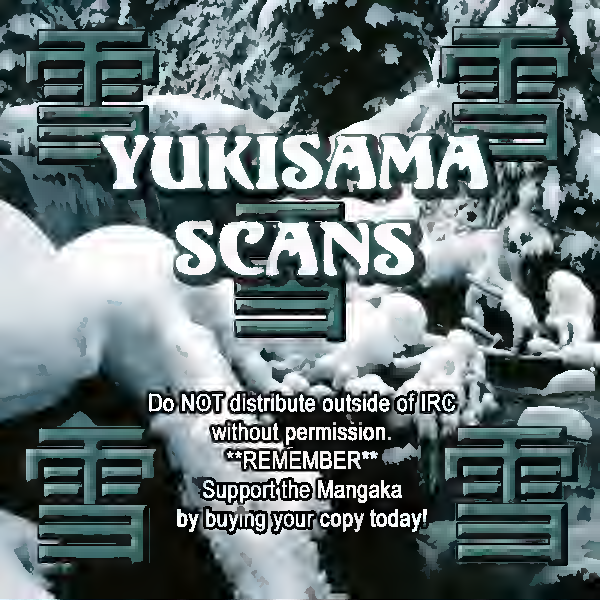
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Rebirth Vol. 8

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REBIRTH™

VOLUME 8

STORY AND ART BY
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TOKYOPOP®
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DESHWITAT—THE VAMPIRE

BETRAYED BY HIS CLOSEST FRIEND AND CAST INTO A PLANE OF VIRTUAL NON-EXISTENCE FOR OVER 300 YEARS. THERE IS ONLY ONE THING THAT DESHWITAT L. RUDEICH CRAVES MORE THAN BLOOD—REVENGE.

KALUTIKA—THE SORCERER

BORN INTO A LIFE OF PRIVILEGE KALUTIKA MAYBUS II STRIVED TO MEET THE EXPECTATIONS OF HIS DOMINEERING FATHER. BUT UNSEEN FORCES AND CRUEL FATE WOULD TRANSFORM HIM INTO A BEING OF SUPREME EVIL.

RETT—THE HELLRAISER

The immortal rogue, Rett Butler, has yet to walk away from a fight—or a comely wench. Another victim of Kaluhka's treachery, Rett's desire for retribution may even rival that of Deshwhat's.

LILITH—THE MAIDEN

The beautiful Lilith Serving was the only human to ever extend an unsolicited hand of kindness to the vampire. On the day Kaluhka murdered her, he unleashed Hell's own fury upon the Earth—Deshwhat.

The Legend of Rebirth

Theirs was a friendship born of adversity and misfortune. A bond forged in battle, tempered by respect, and ultimately broken—by treachery and madness.

In the mid-seventeenth century, Deshwitat L. Rudbich watched as his beloved Lilith Servino was brutally murdered by the sorcerer, Kaluhka Mavbus—a man he once called friend. It was then that Deshwitat was thrown into a state of limbo, a sensorial purgatory, neither dead nor alive. And so he remained for more than 300 years... until a macabre twist of fate ripped him back from the Dark Beyond, and Deshwitat was reborn!

It was the most unlikely of alliances. The vampire Deshwitat, Exorcist-for-hire, Millenear Shephild, and newly orphaned Remi Do, whose father became the reanimated vampire's first victim. Enlisting the pair, in his quest for revenge, Deshwitat demanded that the women aid him in discovering the secrets of Light Magic, which would allow him to destroy the treacherous Kaluhka. In return, Deshwitat promised to let Remi take his life, thus reanimating her father's remains.

The trio's quest led them to a remote Buddhist monastery, where Deshwitat was reunited with a loyal friend, the roguish Reit Butler, cursed with immortality at the hand of Kaluhka. There they were also introduced to the sentient artificial life form known as Beryun, and Master Tae—leader of the Nagamil sect. It was Master Tae who stunned the group with an astounding prophecy—Deshwitat would become instrumental in avoiding the oncoming Apocalypse!

Armed with this latest revelation, the newly formed group traveled to the Vatican City, where they hoped to uncover the secrets of the Power of Light. With a cryptic invitation from a Vatican emissary, Deshwitat was led into a nightmarish trap set by the insane Bishop Bertard, a priest driven mad with visions of Messiah-doom. In a valiant rescue attempt, Reit and the others managed to save their teammate, yet destroy half the Vatican in the process.

It was deep within the labyrinthine Vatican archives that Millenear came upon an ancient tome. Written by the young priest, Father Daniel, centuries earlier, it proved to be the untold history of Deshwitat and Kaluhka.

1624 AD, Eastern Europe

Determined to restore honor to the family name of Mavbus, young Kaluhka's father was looking for a scapegoat to blame for his village's recent misfortunes. Who better than the vampire clan rumored to reside in the mountains of the Eastern Forest? In a night of blood and horror, the adolescent Deshwitat bore witness to the cruel murders of both his benevolent vampire father, and his beautiful human mother. In shock and disbelief at his father's inhumane cruelty, Kaluhka managed to spare Deshwitat's life.

Alone in the world, Deshwitat was captured by a traveling circus and humiliated as part of its freak show. There, a deep-seeded hatred for humanity festered—softened only by a random act of kindness from a girl named Lilith—until Deshwitat escaped into the night. Over the next several years, Deshwitat would exact his revenge upon mankind as he feasted on their blood.

It was during this same period that Kaluhka grew into manhood and rose through the ranks of the Church's Sacred Knights. Driven by the expectations of his father, and struggling with a pathological protectiveness of his sister, Danube, Kaluhka walked a tenuous ethical tightrope in his ascension to power. On the day that he met the swashbuckling rogue, Reit Butler, Kaluhka knew he'd found precisely the strong-armed ally he would need to crush those who opposed him.

While investigating a series of ominous disappearances, Kaluhka, Reit and company scribe Father Daniel were set upon by a horde of slavering zombie-vampires. It was only after destroying these minions of the undead that the group came face to face with the creature responsible—Deshwitat! Incredibly, Reit managed to defeat Deshwitat in battle. But just as Reit was about to deliver the killing blow, Kaluhka stepped in and spared the vampire's life in an act of atonement for his father's evil deed years before. And so began an uneasy truce between a creature of the Darkness and a man in the service of the Church.

Which is where our story now continues...

REBIRTH

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CHAPTER 29-B: LILITH

AN... ESCORT?

YES, MAJOR. YOU'LL BE ESCORTING AN IMPORTANT PERSONAGE SAFELY TO CASTLE LEYROM.

BUT, YOUR GRACE...

...MY SECURITY FORCES HAVE KEPT THE PEACE BOTH WITHIN AND AROUND THE OUTPOST FOR SOME TIME NOW. IS THIS REALLY NECESSARY?

One Month Later

YOU HAVE SIMPLY DRIVEN THE CRIMINAL ELEMENT UNDERGROUND NOT EXTINGUISHED IT. MAJOR

THEY HAVE BECOME MORE ORGANIZED PROGRESSING FROM ROBBERY TO EXTORTION HENCE THE REQUESTED ESCORT

YOU SEE

뚜벅

뚜벅

...THE PERSON YOU'LL BE ESCORTING IS THE DAUGHTER OF A WEALTHY AND INFLUENTIAL CHURCH ELDER

BUT-

-EH?

AH...YES, OF COURSE. WE'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF HER, YOUR GRACE

WONDERFUL! I'M GLAD WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER

GO WITH GOD...

MARVELOUS WET-NURSING SOME LITTLE PRINCESS.
THAT'S THE GOLDEN RULE, KAL. THOSE WITH THE GOLD MAKE THE RULES.

UH, FATHER DANIEL. THAT WAS OFF THE RECORD, BY THE WAY...
NOT TO WORRY, SERGEANT.

WELL, IT'S TIME I WAS OFF, LADS.
HMM? YOU'RE NOT COMING, RETT?

I HAVE FRESH RECRUITS TO TRAIN. TRY NOT TO BREAK HER HEART, MY DASHING YOUNG
RETT!!

UMPH...I'VE NO CHOICE I GUESS. MAY AS WELL GET THIS OVER WITH.

휘이이잉

.....

LADY LILITH, YOUR ESCORT HAS ARRIVED. ARE YOU READY TO DEPART?
YES... I'M COMING, OLGA.

WAIT UNTIL TO SEE THE MAJOR WHO'LL BE ESCORTING YOU. ABSOLUTELY GORGEOUS!
시무룩
YOU GIDDY OLD WOMAN...

CHAPTER 30:
BONDS OF DESTINY

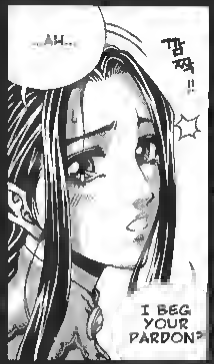
휘이이이잉

I'VE OBSERVED HIM FOR A MONTH, NOW
AS THE DAYS PASSED, I BEGAN TO REALIZE THAT HE WAS SIMPLY AN IDEALISTIC, YOUNG FOOL...
THE HYPOCRISY OF HUMANITY -- IT SHACKLES THOSE NAIVE ENOUGH TO DEFEND ITS FALSE MORALITY
I WATCHED BECAUSE I WAS CURIOUS. HE'D TREATED ME DIFFERENTLY THAN ANY HUMAN EVER HAD. BUT WATCHING HIM ALSO HELPED PASS THE TIME. TIME, AFTER ALL, WAS THE ONE THING I HAD IN ABUNDANCE.
HONESTY, ORDER, INTEGRITY...EMPTY WORDS THE POWERFUL USE TO ENSLAVE THE IGNORANT MASSES

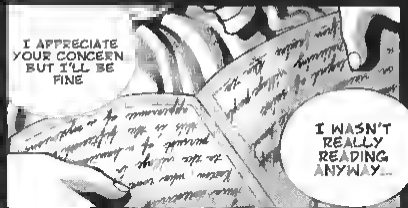
AND HE WAS ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE...
...THAT SOCIETY WOULD CALL A "GOOD-HEARTED FOOL."
SO WHY IS IT THAT I FEEL THIS GROWING SENSE OF KINSHIP TOWARDS HIM?
WHILE IT'S TRUE HE IS A BIT OF AN ANACHRONISM, I AM AN OUTCAST UNTO MYSELF, UTTERLY ALONE.
I WONDER...
...WHO'S THE BIGGER FOOL...?
...EH?!
SOMETHING'S OUT THERE.

WHOA-WHOA-

AS TEDIOUS AS THE JOURNEY MAY BE, I DON'T RECOMMEND READING, LADY LILITH.


...AH...
I BEG YOUR PARDON?

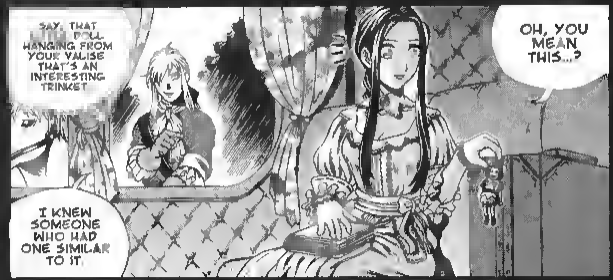
READING IN A MOVING COACH CAN MAKE YOU TERRIBLY NAUSEOUS.
OH, I SEE...


I APPRECIATE YOUR CONCERN, BUT I'LL BE FINE.
I WASN'T REALLY READING ANYWAY...

M'LADY...
...NOT TO BE INTRUSIVE, BUT ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

IT'S ALL RIGHT, MAJOR. I'M FINE.
IT'S JUST THAT... I'M NOT ENTIRELY ENTHUSED ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF THIS TRIP...

.....


SAY, THAT DOLL HANGING FROM YOUR VALISE THAT'S AN INTERESTING TRINKET.
OH, YOU MEAN THIS...?
I KNEW SOMEONE WHO HAD ONE SIMILAR TO IT.

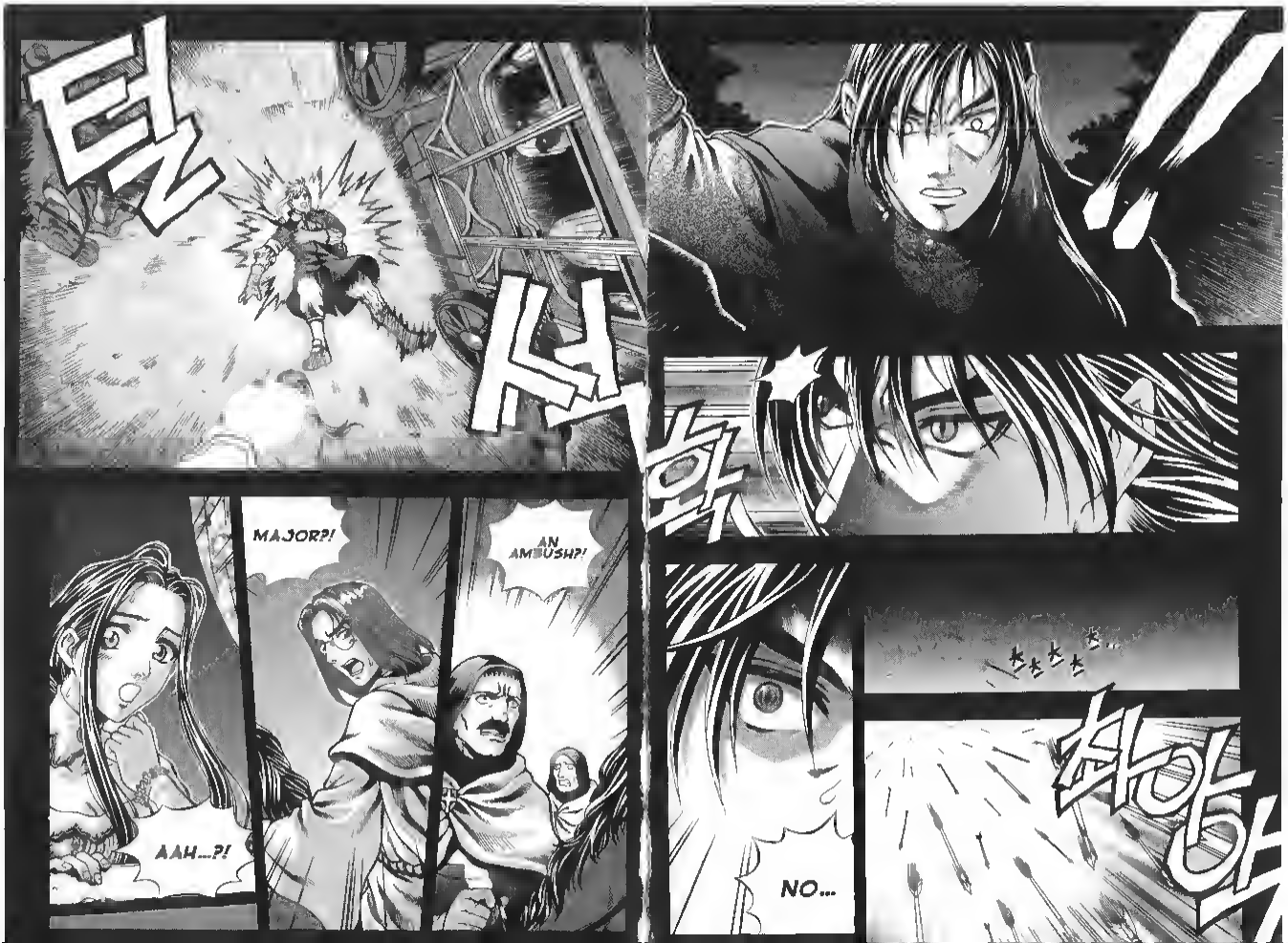
JUST A CHILDHOOD TOY... IT'S ALL RAGGED NOW BUT I CAN'T BEAR TO THROW IT AWAY
IT ONCE HAD A TWIN... BUT I GAVE THE OTHER TO A LONELY BOY IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO

I CAN TELL YOU HAVE A KIND HEART, M'LADY.

YOU'RE NOT AT ALL WHAT I'D EXPECTED MAJOR
I'D HEARD THAT ALL MILITARY MEN WERE BRASH AND ILL MANNERED.

BUT YOU'RE DIFFERENT MOST MEN WOULDN'T EVEN NOTICE SOMETHING LIKE MY DOLL.
URR...AS I SAID...IT BELONGED TO AN ACQUAIN-TANCE.
WELL... I'M SURE SHE'S AN INTRIGUING PERSON PERHAPS WE'LL MEET ONE DAY...
I...I DON'T THINK THAT'S LIKELY, LADY LILITH...

I'VE LOST TRACK OF HIM-UH... HER...
KYONONO
-WHA...?

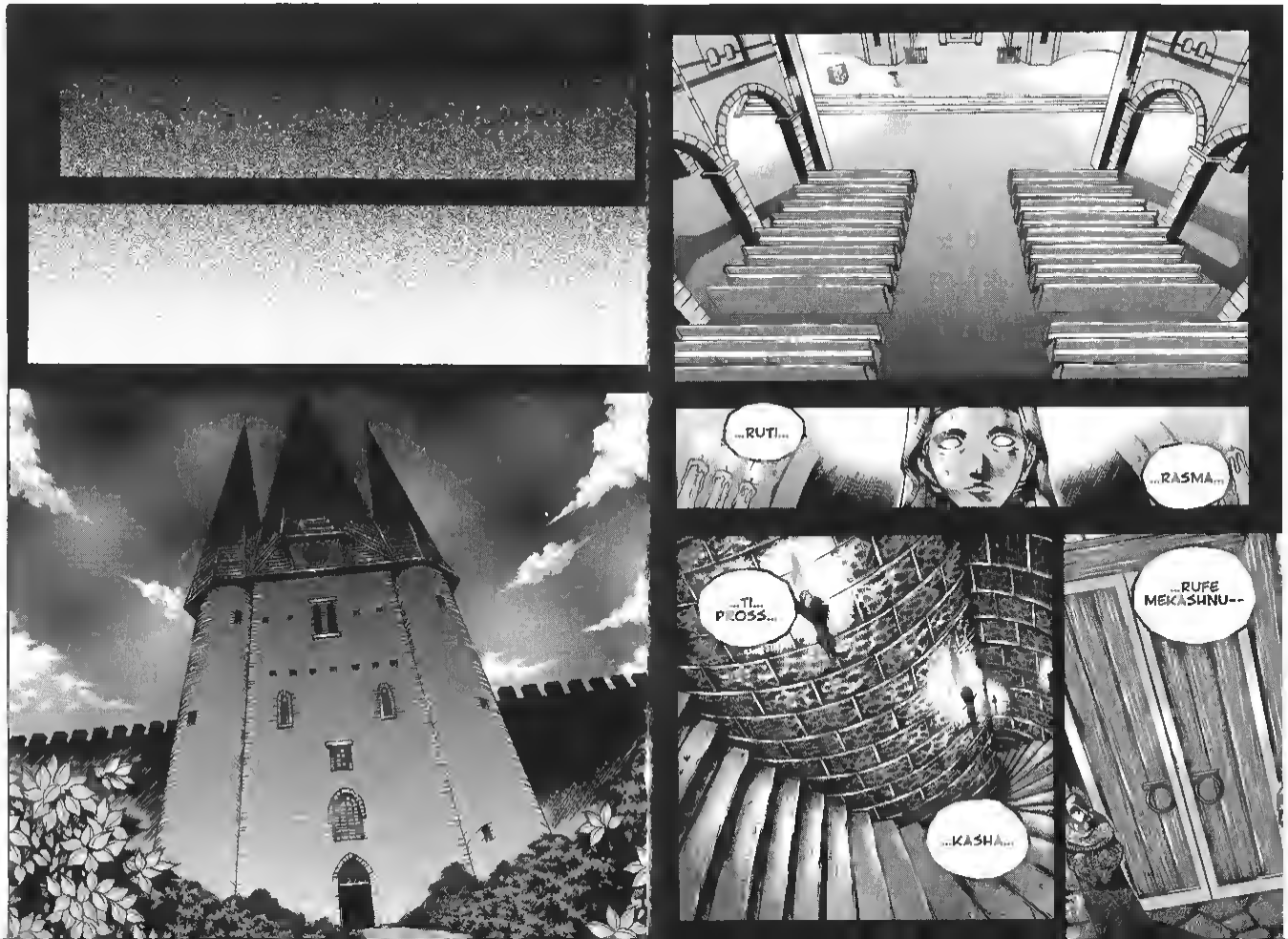


NO...
AN AMBUSH?!
MAJOR?!
AAH...?!

AAIEEE!!
URGH!!
MAJOR MAYEUS, CAN YOU STAND?
ARGH...!
I'M ALL RIGHT, DANIEL. HURRY NOW... GET RETT...
MAJOR... I CAN'T LEAVE YOU LIKE THIS...
GO NOW!!
ALL RIGHT, IF I MUST! HOLD ON SIR, WE'LL BE BACK!!

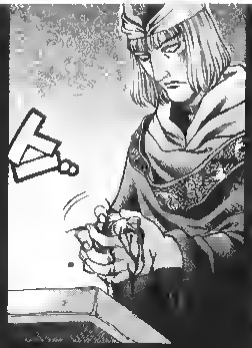
LADY-COUGH-LILITH I'M GOING TO GET YOU OUT OF HERE
KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN. I'M GOING TO COACH...
Y-YES, MAJOR!
HA-! AND D'EY SAY CHIVALRY'S DEAD!
BUT ME TINKS YOU SOON WILL BE. EH, BLONDIE?
HEH...
HEH... HEH...
IDENTIFY YOURSELF!
WHAT IS IT YOU WANT?!
DAT'S NONE A'YOUR BUSINESS BOY. OUR BUSINESS BE WITH THE PRETTY LITTLE MINX IN THE COACH D'ERE
LOP HIS HEAD OFF!
AY!

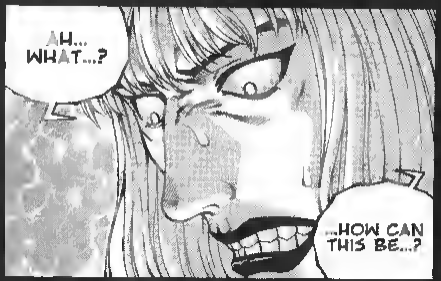
CHAPTER 31: FATEFUL INTERVENER


...RUTI...
...RASMA...
...TI...
PROSS...
...KASHA...
...RUFE
MEKASHNU--

--INTIRAK DEBERIK--
--LESIPHRAD DE VERKADH!!

DARK LORD WHO WILL LEAD THE FAITHFUL TO THE PARADISE IN THE NEW BEGINNING!!
THE GREAT PRIEST OF BLOOD AND DARKNESS--VERKADH!!
RAH RAH-!!
THE TIME IS NIGH FOR YOUR RETURN-
RETURN FROM EXILE!!
ACCEPT THIS OFFERING OF THE FLESH, O'LORD
AND LEAD US INTO YOUR COLD EMBRACE!!
REVEAL THE PATH TO PARADISE...
...SANCTIFIED WITH BLOOD!!
HARUMAN!!
NO... PLEASE...
...PLEASE... LET ME GO...





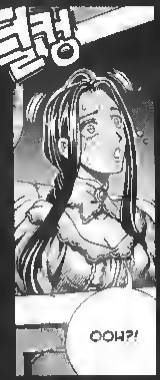
INTERVENER?
DOES THAT MEAN SOMETHING HAS HAPPENED TO KALUTIKA MAYBUS..?
SILENCE, YOU IDIOT!!
INTERVENER..!
A DISRUPTER OF THE DIVINE PLAN!!
...BUT NOW THE IE IS SOMETHING UNFORESEEN... SOMEONE WHO HAS UPSET THE BALANCE OF OUR DESTINY...
AND AS LONG AS HE LIVES, HE'LL PLAY THE ROLE FATE HAS PROVIDED HIM...
THE YOUNG MAJOR IS IN PERIL, BUT HE WILL SURVIVE!
LOOK...
...INTO THE DARK...
BUT LORD JOSIMOV... WHERE DO WE BEGIN TO LOOK...?
FIND THE "INTERVENER" AND DESTROY HIM AT ANY COST!
THE FATE OF OUR NEW PARADISE DEPENDS UPON IT!
FIND HIM!!
WH-WHAT IS IT, MY LORD?!
...HOW CAN THIS BE...?
AH... WHAT...?

DARKNESS IS THE INTERVENER'S EMBLEM...
...HE WEARS IT LIKE A SHROUD. AND HE WILL ENVELOP THE MAJOR IN IT.
DIE!!

...DE... DESHWITAT?!
CONSIDER THAT REPAYMENT...
...FOR ONE OF THE LIVES I OWE YOU
REPAID WITH INTEREST...

I'M SO RELIEVED THAT MAJOR MAYRUS IS ALL RIGHT...
BUT I DON'T REMEMBER SEEING THAT ONE AMONG THE SOLDIERS...

I CAN'T HELP THINKING...
...THAT HE LOOKS SO FAMILIAR...


OOH?!

WHYAAHH!!

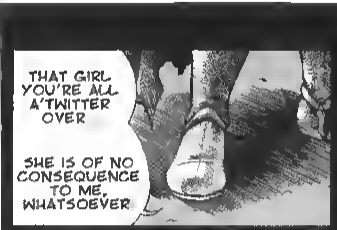
NEIGH!!

WHA--?!
OOOFF!!
HE'S TAKEN LADY LILITH!!

MANY T'ANKS TO YA, KIND SIRS--HA HA!!
I DEMAND THAT YOU STOP THIS COACH AT ONCE!!
WELL, NOW... YU'RE A SIGHT PRETTIER THAN THEY MADE YA OUT TA BE!
AN WHO KNOWS HOW LONG THEY'LL TAKE TA PAY DA RANSOM...

NOT TO WORRY, MY LITTLE PARTRIDGE... I'LL GIVE YA MY UNDIVIDED ATTENTION--HA!!
OH!
DESHWITAT ...PLEASE! YOU HAVE TO HELP ME!
GOD ONLY KNOWS WHAT HE MAY DO TO HER!!

LET ME MAKE MYSELF CLEAR, HUMAN...


THAT GIRL YOU'RE ALL A'TWITTER OVER
SHE IS OF NO CONSEQUENCE TO ME, WHATSOEVER

...I SAVED YOU JUST NOW BECAUSE I FELT I OWED IT TO YOU
IF YOU'RE SO CONCERNED ABOUT HER MAIDENLY VIRTUE, THEN YOU GO SAVE HER.

DON'T YOU THINK I WANT TO, DAMMIT?!
I WISH I COULD DE-SHWITAT!!

...DO YOU THINK I WANTED TO BE A BORN A WEAKLING?
I'D GIVE ANYTHING... ANYTHING TO BE AS STRONG AS YOU...

BUT I'M NOT MY SKILLS LAY.. ELSEWHERE
I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO RELY ON THOSE WHO ARE

PLEASE, YOU MUST HELP LADY LILITH! SURELY YOU'RE NOT THAT CALLOUS?!
IT'S WITHIN YOU TO SAVE HER, DESHWITAT. IT'S WITHIN YOU...

...TO DO GOOD. I KNOW IT IS.

HMPH...

휘이이잉

YOU'RE WRONG ABOUT THAT...
탁
...BUT MY DEBT'S NOT YET SETTLED WITH YOU

LISTEN WELL, MAYBUS. I SAVE HER AND WE'RE EVEN. AFTER THAT...
...BE CAREFUL WHEN YOU GO OUT AT NIGHT.

OF COURSE--
AND STOP SNIVELING...

...I DIDN'T CHOOSE TO BE BORN THIS WAY EITHER. BUT I LIVE WITH IT.

NOT SO FAST!
WHERE YA THINK YUR GOIN'?

WE AIN'T FINISHED WITH YA... YET...

...SO YUR NOT GO-

LESS TALK-- MORE BLOOD!

MINERVA SAVE US!!
KILL THAT SON OF A WHORE!
...MY MOTHER!!
LACKEY-- NEVER SPEAK OF...

HUFF
FREEEEZ
...EH?
YUR...
...OUTTA YUR HEAD!
RUN ALL YA WANT YA LOONY BASTARD-- HA HA!

WHAT?! NO MAN COULD--!!
IT'S HIM... THE ONE FROM BEFORE...!

ARGH!!
DIE!!
SO...
...YOU'RE NOT MORTAL...
DAT MAKES TWO OF US!!

카카카
콰앙
AAAHH!!
NEIGH! NEIGH!

THAT... THAT SOUND!
...EH?!
BLAST, HE'S STRONG...!
HHAR!!
HHAR!!

CHAPTER 32: THE UNLIKELIEST OF GUARDIANS

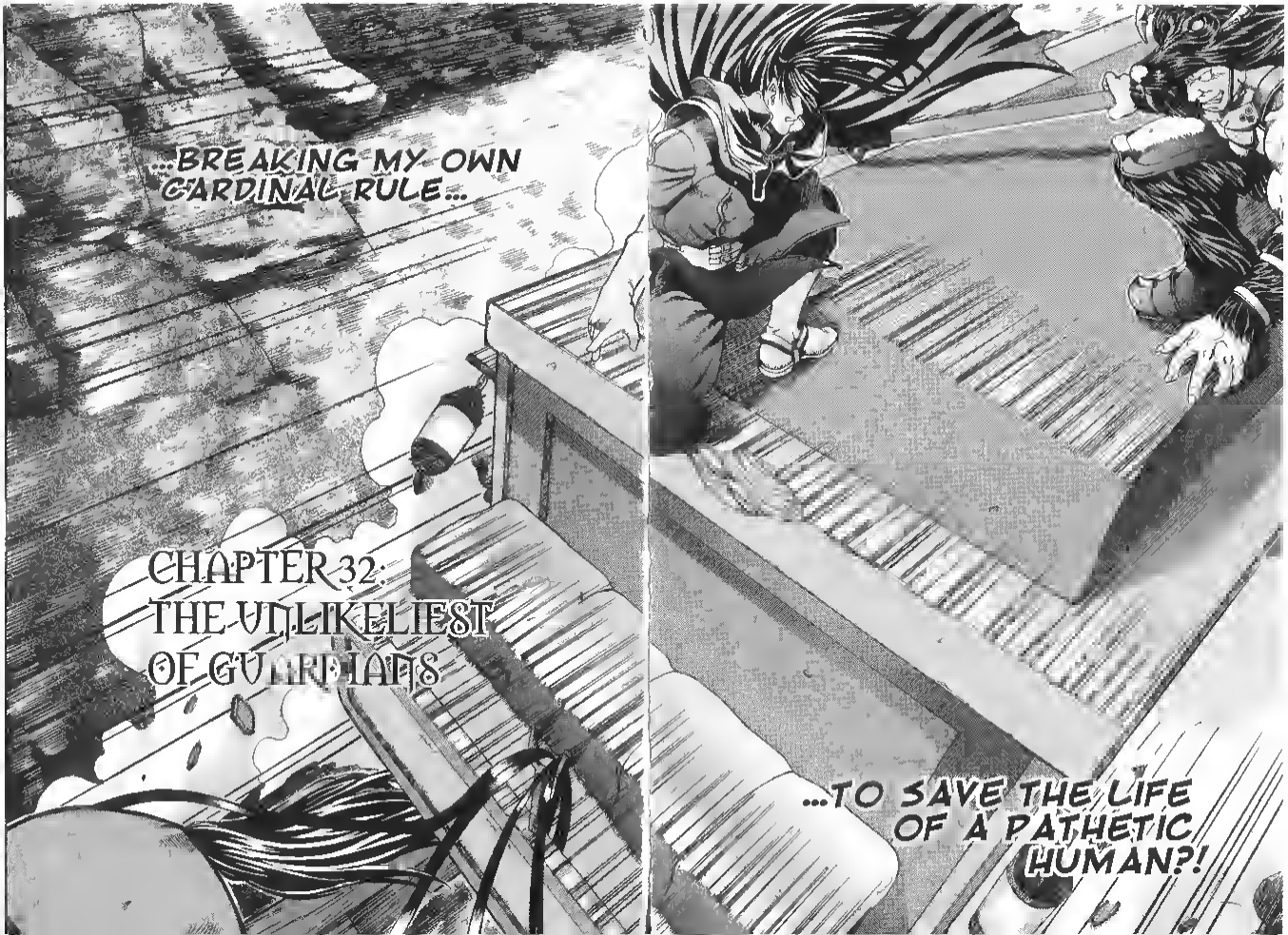
I, DESHWITAT L. LUDBICH...

...HAVE ALWAYS CONSIDERED MYSELF TO BE AN INTELLIGENT MAN.

"LOOK AFTER YOURSELF, AND LET THE REST FEND FOR THEMSELVES..."

THAT HAS BEEN, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE, MY MOTTO

SO WHY AM I...


...BREAKING MY OWN CARDINAL RULE...
CHAPTER 32: THE UNLIKELIEST OF GUARDIANS
...TO SAVE THE LIFE OF A PATHETIC HUMAN?!

RIDICULOUS! THAT I SHOULD FEEL SOME OBLIGATION TO HIM!

FOR THAT SENTIMENTAL FOOL MAYBUS, NO LESS!

...AS TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE!

ENOUGH OF THIS...I'LL NOT MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE AGAIN!

BUT NOW TO THE MATTER AT HAND...

YUR TESTIN' MY PATIENCE..
...FILTHY BLOOD-SUCKER!
NOW... STAND STILL!!
?!
UHRK?!
AAARGHH!!
...KILL YOU...

카카카카카카
UH- UH- UH...!
쥬마
쥬마
쥬마
쾅
쾅
쾅
GET UP, PIG...
DAMN! NO FOOTING... CAN'T SEEM TO LAND A SOLID BLOW...
ARRHH!!
...AND I'M RUNNING OUT OF TIME!
I NEED TO PUT THIS DROOLING CRETIN DOWN SOON, OR...
두두두두

UGH!
HA!!
WHA-?!

HAHA HAHA!!
CRUNCH
GOTCHA YA POINTY-EARED SON OF A FLYIN' RAT!
UGH... ARGH!
WHAT'S DAT YA SAY--"KILL ME NOW"?!
WITH BLOODY PLEASURE!!

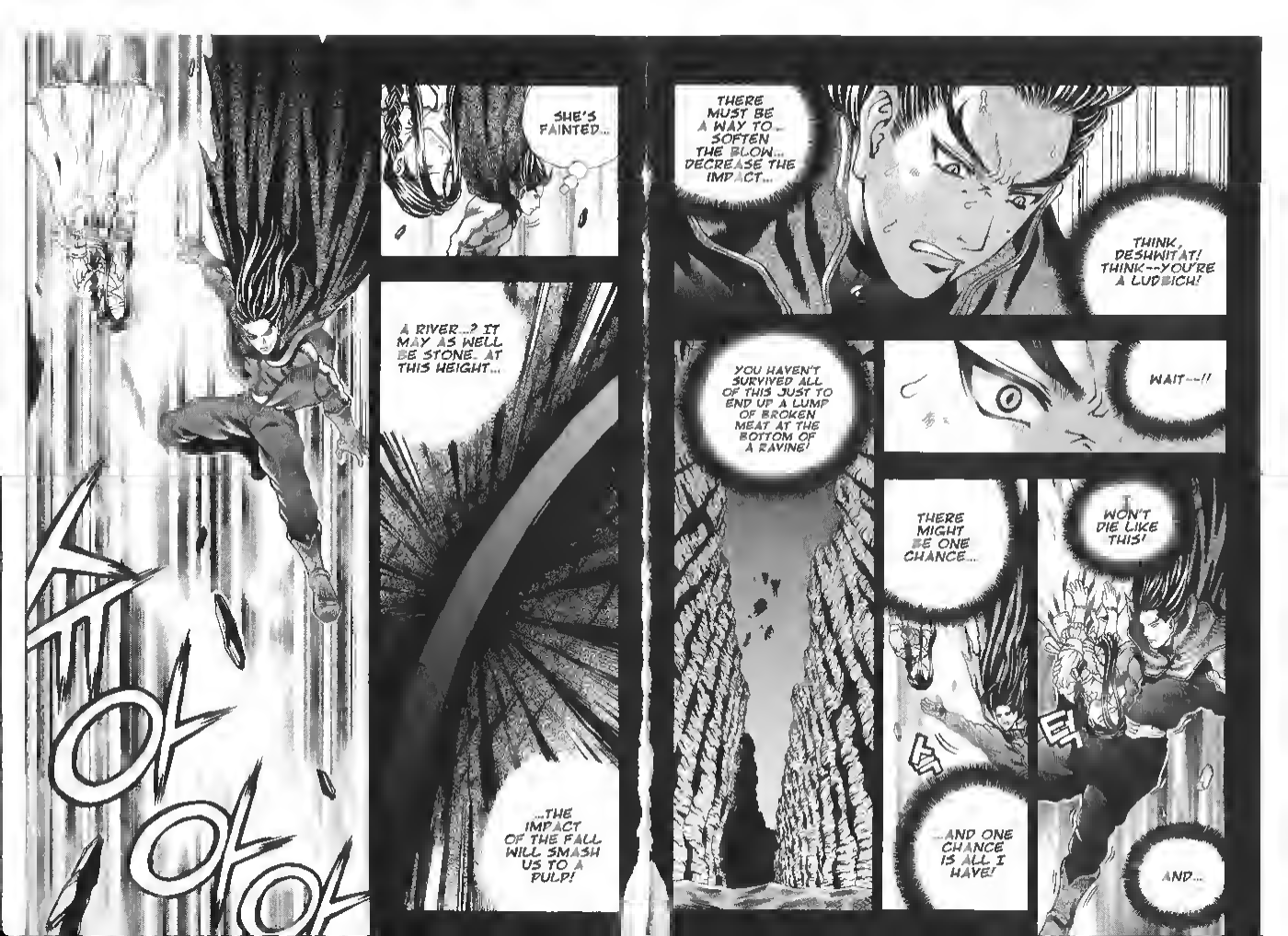
DIE!!
HURK!!
GAHK!!
HAHAHA...NOW WHAT'S YUR PLEASURE, YA PILE A GUANO? YOU BEEN WASTIN' MY TIME...
...AN' DAT MEANS TIME AWAY FROM DA LITTLE PRINCESS OVER D'ERE
SHALL I WRING YOUR NECK LIKE DIS...? NO, DAT'S TOO EASY...HOW 'BOUT SHREDDIN' YOU TA' PIECES WITH MY AX?
WAIT...I GOT ME A BETTER IDEA. HOW 'BOUT GIVIN' A VAMPIRE HIS DUE BY USIN' MY OWN TEETH TO RIP YA APART? WHAD YA SAY TO DAT, EH?
AHHH!!
YOUR BREATH STINKS...
EH-?!

AAIIEEE!!
UGH... YOU BITCH...
ARRGH! MY EYE--!!
OH, GOAT-BOY...

하아
THAT'S U-UNBELIEVABLE! HOW COULD YOU DO THAT?
NO TIME FOR YAPPING, WENCH! IF WE DON'T STOP THIS COACH-
AHHH?!
UFF!
덜컹

BLAST IT ALL--
TOO LATE!!
NEIGH!!

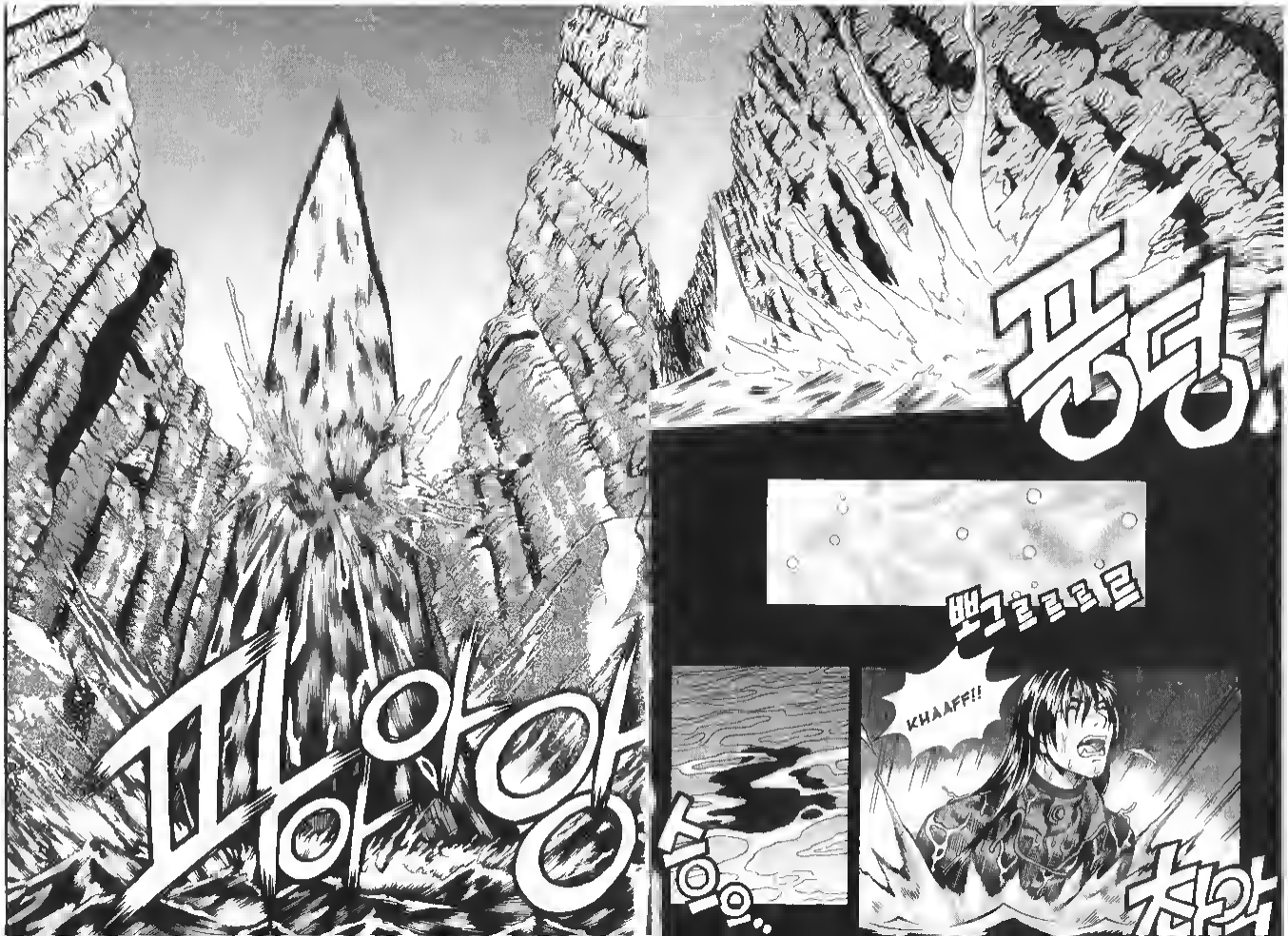
AA HHH!

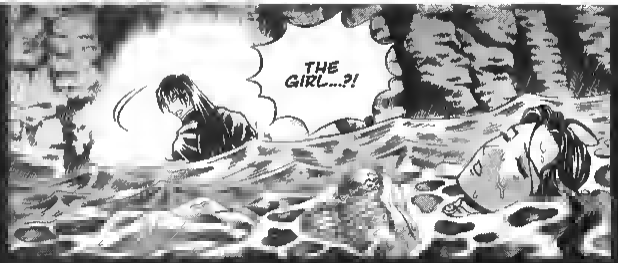

SHE'S FAINTED...
A RIVER...? IT MAY AS WELL BE STONE. AT THIS HEIGHT...
...THE IMPACT OF THE FALL WILL SMASH US TO A PULP!
THERE MUST BE A WAY TO... SOFTEN THE BLOW... DECREASE THE IMPACT...
THINK, DESHWITAT! THINK--YOU'RE A LUDEICH!
YOU HAVEN'T SURVIVED ALL OF THIS JUST TO END UP A LUMP OF BROKEN MEAT AT THE BOTTOM OF A RAVINE!
WAIT--!!
THERE MIGHT BE ONE CHANCE...
...AND ONE CHANCE IS ALL I HAVE!
WON'T DIE LIKE THIS!
AND...

...NEITHER WILL SHE!!

I'LL HAVE TO TIME THIS PERFECTLY!
HYOHOH
OH!
CREATE A COUNTER CURRENT ON THE SURFACE OF THE WATER AT THE MOMENT OF IMPACT.
THE SPRAY CREATED BY AN EXPLOSION MIGHT GIVE US A CUSHION...
BUT IF MY TIMING IS OFF BY EVEN AN INSTANT
...SHE AND I WILL BE PULVERIZED BEYOND RECOGNITION.
SO BE IT.
TIME TO DO OR DIE...
NOT YET...
NOT... YET!!
NOW!!
HYAAAAA!!
OH

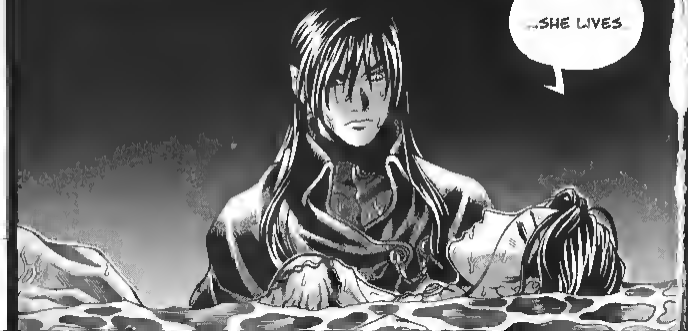
ドドドドド


풍덩!
뻗그르르르르
KHAAFF!!
촤악
스으으..
파아아앙


THE GIRL...?!

치익

SHE LIVES!


...SHE LIVES...

HOOO-!
첨벙!

I...

...DID IT...
...I DID IT!
...HA! ...HAHA HA!
...I DID IT...

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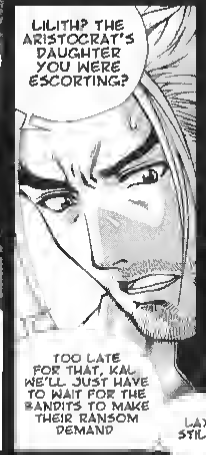
JANUARY 27, 1635 WAS ONE OF THE MOST AUSPICIOUS DAYS IN DESHWITAT L. LUDBICH'S LIFE.

IT WAS THE DAY HE FIRST EXPERIENCED THE JOY OF SAVING A LIFE, RATHER THAN THE THRILL OF TAKING ONE.

HYAAH!!

FATHER DANIEL!!
AREN'T WE THERE YET?
ALMOST! IT SHOULD BE JUST OVER THIS HILL!
...!!
RETT... LOOK!!
I SEE HIM!
KAL!!
MAJOR MAYBUS!!
KAL!!
HELLO... RETT...
YOU'VE ...CO-COME... I...KNEW YOU...
WHOA! DON'T TALK WE'LL EXCHANGE PLEASANTRIES LATER
LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THAT WOUND... HMM...YOU'LL LIVE, KAL.
BUT YOU'RE BLEEDIN' LIKE A STUCK PIG LAD LAY STILL NOW...

RETT.. I'M FINE.
PLEASE... GO HELP LADY LILITH. SHE'S BEEN TAKEN CAPTIVE...


LILITH? THE ARISTOCRAT'S DAUGHTER YOU WERE ESCORTING?
TOO LATE FOR THAT, KAL. WE'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT FOR THE BANDITS TO MAKE THEIR RANSOM DEMAND
LAY STILL.

NO...RETT... IT'S NOT TOO LATE. DESHWITAT WENT AFTER HER...
GO...HELP HIM. THEIR CHIEF WAS LIKE A RABID BEAST.

EASY, LAD.
DANIEL, THROW ME THAT MEDICAL SATCHEL.

WAIT...!

DESHWITAT?!
YOU MEAN THAT DEVIL-SPAWN VAMPIRE?

I- I CAN'T BELIEVE IT...
KAL, THINK ABOUT IT...YOU JUST SENT THE WOLF TO SAVE THE HEN FROM THE FOX.
HE PROBABLY SAVED HER ALL RIGHT...SAVED HER FOR HIMSELF.

NO, RETT... YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. HE'S THE ONE WHO SAVED ME. HE AND I SHARE...A BOND.
DESHWITAT... ISN'T THE EVIL CREATURE YOU THINK HE IS...

I FEEL THAT I UNDERSTAND HIM...
HE'S A VICTIM...A VICTIM OF CRUEL AND CAPRICIOUS FATE.
MAJOR MAYBUS! AM I TO UNDERSTAND THAT YOU...AN OFFICER OF THE SACRED KNIGHTS...AND A CREATURE OF THE DARK—
STOW IT, FADRE... WHATEVER YOU SAY, KAL... BUT FOR NOW, YOU REST UNTIL WE CAN GET YOU TO A SURGEON.

CHAPTER 33: OUT OF THE PAST

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활
왁자
지껄
HUH?
콱

IT... IT'S TO-KAR!

WHERE ARE... MY BROTHERS?
IN - INSIDE THE TENT.

WELCOME BACK, TO-KAR.

HUFF
HUFF
뚜벅
뚜벅

IT'S ME...
ENTER.

스윽

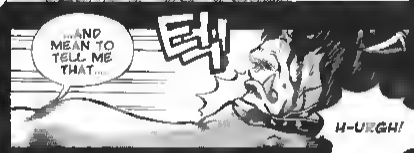
AS I LOOK AT YOUR WRETCHED APPEARANCE...
...I FIND MYSELF WONDERING...
...HOW COULD IT BE SO HARD TO CAPTURE ONE LITTLE GIRL?

YOUR EXCUSE?

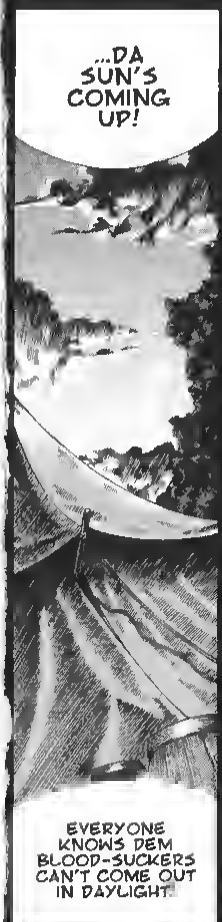
IT WAS AS GOOD AS DONE BUT A VAMPIRE... BLEW THINGS ALL TA HELL...

A VAMPIRE...? THEY STILL EXIST?
I THOUGHT THEY'D BEEN ALL BUT EXTERMINATED IN THESE PARTS.
I NEVER SEEN ONE LIKE DIS. DEVILISH AND BROODIN'... STRONGER THAN HELL.

MY CONCERN IS NOT WITH THE VAMPIRE...
HSSS
...BUT THAT YOU COME BACK HERE...


...AND MEAN TO TELL ME THAT...
H-UEGH!

...WE'VE LOST THE GIRL?! LOST THE RANSOM?!
N-NO! I SAW DEM FALL INTO A RAVINE. IF DEY'RE ALIVE, DEY CAN'T BE FAR...


...DA SUN'S COMING UP!
EVERYONE KNOWS DEM BLOOD-SUCKERS CAN'T COME OUT IN DAYLIGHT!

HMM... TRUE, TRUE. BUT THE SUN IS NO FRIEND TO OUR KIND, EITHER.
BUT FUR HIM, IT'S DEATH FUR SURE...HA!

HAHAHA...

THEN GO, MY KINSMEN! BRING THEM TO ME BEFORE DAY'S END!
THE VAMPIRE'S HEAD ON A PIKE! THE WENCH IN MY BED! AND THE RANSOM PAID IN FULL!

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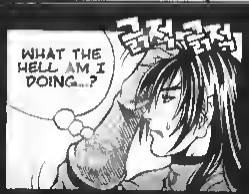
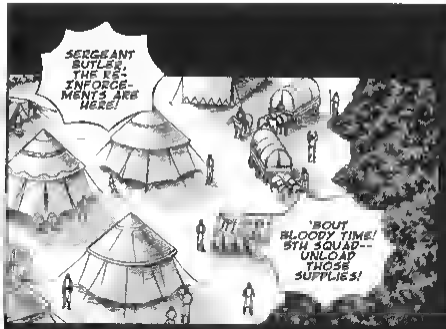
HMPH...

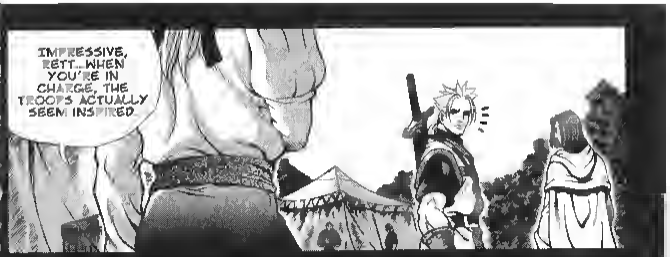
NO!!


WHAT THE HELL AM I DOING...?
굼틀굼틀

DAMMIT!
IT COULDN'T BE!
JUST A COINCIDENCE THESE DOLLS MUST BE AS COMMON AS DIRT
I DON'T EVEN KNOW HER NAME.
OR THE CHILD'S NAME... FOR THAT MATT--
BUT WAIT...
I DO REMEMBER!! THEIR NAMES ARE THE SAME!
LADY LILITH-LILITH-
WHERE ARE YOU LILITH?
AH...
HE'S TAKEN LADY LILITH!!
LADY LILITH-LILITH-
WHERE ARE YOU LILITH?
AH-
LI LITH...
LIL.. LILITH..
I HAVE TO GO...
YOU COME BACK NEXT YEAR. I'LL COME TO SEE YOU AGAIN
PLEASE, YOU MUST HELP LADY LILITH! SURELY YOU'RE NOT THAT CALLOUS?!
IT'S WITHIN YOU TO SAVE HER...
LILITH!


SERGEANT BUTLER, THE RE-INFORCE-MENTS ARE HERE!
'BOUT BLOODY TIME! 5TH SQUAD--UNLOAD THOSE SUPPLIES!

MOVE LIVELY NOW, LADS!
SQUADS 2, AND 3 WILL BE THE SEARCH PARTY FOR LADY LILITH! SQUAD 4--SET A PERIMETER!
AYE, SIR!!


IMPRESSIVE, RETT...WHEN YOU'RE IN CHARGE, THE TROOPS ACTUALLY SEEM INSPIRED.

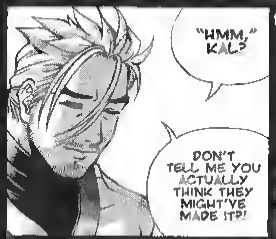
KAL, I TOLD YOU TO STAY IN THAT DAMN COT!

EXCELLENT BEDSIDE MANNER, RETT BUT..
I COULDN'T REST EVEN IF I TRIED

ANY PROGRESS, YET?

WE TRACED THE COACH'S TRACKS TO THE EDGE OF A RAVINE
FROM THE LOOKS OF IT, THE DAMN THING WENT RIGHT OVER.
ANYONE STILL INSIDE THAT CRATE'S FEEDING THE FISHES NOW

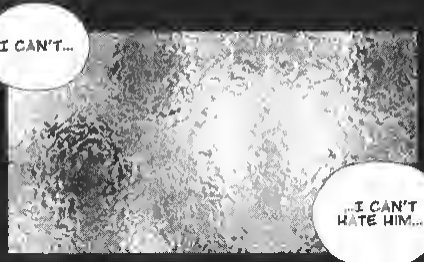
HMM...


"HMM," KAL?
DON'T TELL ME YOU ACTUALLY THINK THEY MIGHT'VE MADE IT?!

TELL ME, MAJOR. I'M CURIOUS.
WHAT IS IT YOU SEE IN HIM THAT INEXPLICABLY INSPIRES SUCH FAITH?

I'M NOT SURE...
IT'S HARD TO PUT INTO WORDS...

...BUT HE AND I HAVE SOMETHING IN COMMON
ALMOST AS IF WE WERE BROTHERS SEPARATED IN CHILDHOOD..
휘이이
I KNOW IT'S INSANE, BUT I CAN'T SHAKE OFF THIS FEELING.


I CAN'T...
...I CAN'T HATE HIM...

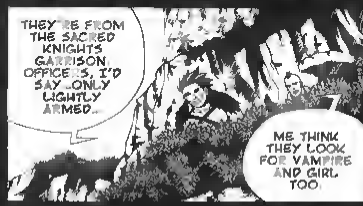
RETT, I'M SURE YOU THINK ME A BLUBBERING FOOL.
POSSIBLY...

HUPHA!
타

DANIEL, YOU'RE OVER-SEEING SQUAD 5
KAL, LETS US HAVE A LOOK AT THE LAY OF THE LAND
PROBABLY PICK THAT BLOOD-SUCKER AND YOUR LADY FRIEND HAVING TEA IN THE SHADE.

GOOD MAN, RETT!

ASSUMING THERE'D BE MUCH LEFT
...THEY SHOULD BE SOMEWHERE NEAR HERE
IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE...
...THEY COULD HAVE COME OUT ANYWHERE ELSE
NOT BLOODY LIKELY
THE RIVER FLOWS UN-INTERRUPTED FROM WHERE THEY WENT OFF TO THIS SPOT
UNLESS THOSE GODLESS CREATURES REALLY CAN TURN INTO BATS HE'D BE RIGHT HERE
AND SINCE HE'S TOO DELICATE FOR DIRECT SUNLIGHT...
...I'M WILLING TO WAGER YOUR FANGY FRIEND'S GOT HIMSELF A HIDING SPOT NEARBY!


THEY'RE FROM THE SACRED KNIGHTS GARRISON OFFICE...S, I'D SAY ONLY LIGHTLY ARMED...
ME THINK THEY LOOK FOR VAMPIRE AND GIRL TOO.

BRILLIANT... YOU BUFFOON... SHUT UP AND KILL THEM

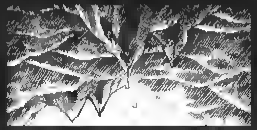
WAIT!

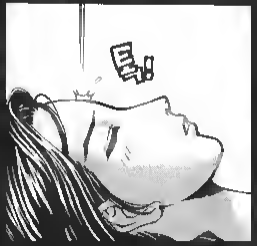
IS IT... REALLY HIM?!

YOU KNOW THE BIG ONE, CHIEF?
I KNOW OF HIM...

HIS NAME IS RETT BUTLER, ALSO CALLED THE HELLRAISER. FOR A WHILE HE WAS THE LEADER OF A BAND OF OUTLAWS CALLING THEMSELVES, "THE KERBEROS."
CHANGE OF PLANS. WE WON'T KILL HIM, WE'LL FOLLOW HIM INSTEAD.
WHILE IT'S TRUE HE WAS A FEROCIOUS KILLER... HE WAS ALSO A MASTER TRACKER AND HUNTER.
SO THE RUMORS WERE TRUE... HE'S A LAPDOG FOR THE SACRED KNIGHTS.
WE'LL SIMPLY FOLLOW HIM FROM A DISCREET DISTANCE...

...AND HE'LL LEAD US RIGHT TO THE VAMPIRE AND THE BEAUTIFUL LITTLE LADY.




툭!

OLGA, JUST TEN MORE MINUTES, PLEASE?
바락-

...TEN MORE...

!!
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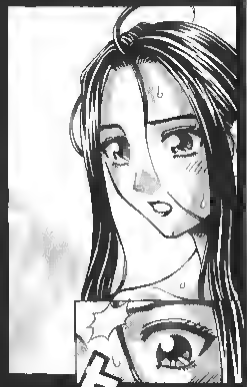

...EH...?!
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WHA--WHAT'S GOING ON?! WHY AM I UNDRESSED?!
MY CLOTHES
HM... UH...WHAT'S ALL THE SHOUTING FOR?
EEEEE-- DON'T LOOK, YOU PERVERT!!
.....
COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE! DID YOU TAKE OFF MY--
HOW COULD YOU--I MEAN, IF YOU TRIED ANYTHING...

IF..IF YOU'VE ...
OH, HOW COULD YOU?!
WHAT AN INGRATE! YOU SHOULD BE THANKING ME FOR SAVING YOUR MISERABLE LIFE! YOUR CLOTHES WERE SOAKED THROUGH..
-- YOU WERE SHIVERING LIKE A LEAF. THAT'S WHY I TOOK THEM OFF.
WET...? BUT... WHY...?
NO, WAIT... I REMEMBER...
THE RAVINE LAST NIGHT... THE COACH AND ALL... HOW DID I SURVIVE THE FALL?

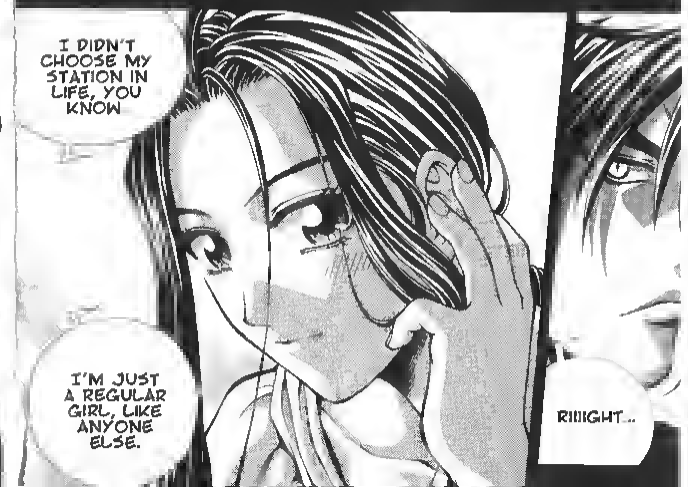
OH DEAR. IF HE HADN'T SAVED ME, WHO KNOWS WHAT THOSE SAVAGES MIGHT HAVE DONE TO ME...
CURSE HER FOR WAKING ME. IT MUST ONLY BE 5 O'CLOCK...
THE SUN IS STILL UP.
AHEM...
PLEASE FORGIVE MY RUDENESS I REALIZE WHAT YOU'VE DONE FOR ME
HMPH.
BUT I REALLY MUST KNOW...
NOTHING...
...REALLY HAPPENED... RIGHT?
NO!! ABSOLUTELY
SUCH VANITY.
AM I...THAT UNATTRACTIVE?
AAH!!
A J-JEST, SIR. ONLY A JEST.
HEH... AHEM...

HAHAHA HAHA!
TEE-HEE
WHAT IS SO AMUSING?

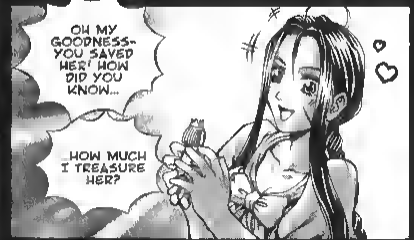
WHY, YOU ARE-
THAT UTTERLY NONPLUSSED LOOK ON YOUR FACE IS PRICELESS
IT'S LIKE YOU'VE NEVER TALKED TO A GIRL BEFORE
OH, NOTHING...
...NOTHING AT ALL.

ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF. MY NAME IS LILITH SERVINO.
AND IT SEEMS THAT I OWE YOU MY LIFE.

DESHWITAT L. RUDBICH.
FOR SOMEONE OF NOBLE BIRTH, YOU'RE A BIT UNREFINED.
WHAT DOES MY BIRTH HAVE TO DO WITH IT?

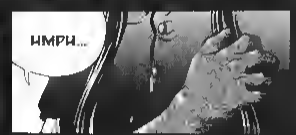

I DIDN'T CHOOSE MY STATION IN LIFE, YOU KNOW.
I'M JUST A REGULAR GIRL, LIKE ANYONE ELSE.
RIIIGHT...

IS THAT MY ?


OH MY GOODNESS- YOU SAVED HER! HOW DID YOU KNOW...
...HOW MUCH I TREASURE HER?

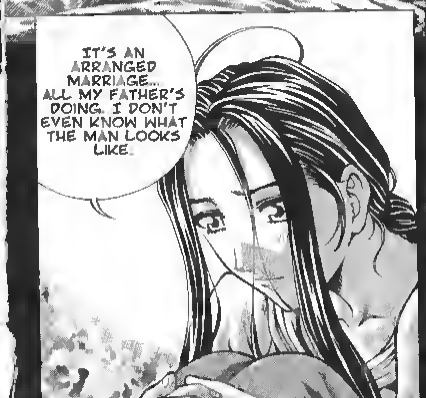
YAY!
YAY!
I'LL GIVE YOU THIS YOU MUST BE LONELY

HERE... HER NAME IS JULIE. TREAT HER WELL, OKAY?


HMPH...

...SO WHAT?
THE FACT THAT SHE'S THAT GIRL FROM THE PAST CHANGES NOTHING

YOU KNOW..
...I WAS ACTUALLY HOPING THAT SOMETHING UNEXPECTED MIGHT HAPPEN... SOMETHING THAT WOULD KEEP ME FROM ARRIVING AT CASTLE LEYROM
I MEAN, OF COURSE I NEVER WANTED ANYONE TO DIE...
...IT'S JUST THAT I DIDN'T WANT TO REACH MY INTENDED DESTINATION


IT'S AN ARRANGED MARRIAGE... ALL MY FATHER'S DOING. I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THE MAN LOOKS LIKE.

WELL... UH...

...I DON'T SEE WHY YOU'RE SO UPSET.
IF YOU DON'T WANT TO DO IT, THEN DON'T.
IF ONLY IT WERE THAT SIMPLE.
THERE ARE THINGS BEYONG MY CONTROL.
I WOULDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT
I AM BOUND BY NO ONE'S WILL SAVE MY OWN
A MOMENT AGO YOU TOLD ME YOU WERE MERELY A NORMAL GIRL.
WELL MAYBE THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM... YOU ARE A FOLLOWER, YOUNG LADY.
I HAVE A PHILOSOPHY THAT HAS SERVED ME WELL...
"...ONE SHAPES ONE'S OWN DESTINY!"
NO MATTER WHAT THE PRICE.
YOU ARE REALLY...
...QUITE...
...A PIECE OF WORK.

I'M SURE IT MUST KEEP MAJOR MAYBUS' HANDS FULL..
...HAVING SOMEONE LIKE YOU UNDER HIS COMMAND--
HOW DARE YOU REFER TO ME AS HIS UNDERLING!
EEP!

YOU... YOU'RE NOT ONE OF HIS MEN?
HE...HE'S JUST...

A-
ER...

A FR-FRIEND.
DID I JUST---?!

HMM...A STORMY FRIENDSHIP, I'D IMAGINE.
WELL, NEVER MIND. IT'S NEARLY DUSK, SHOULDN'T WE BE GOING?

THE SUN...

NO THE SUN IS STILL--
I MEAN, THE BANDITS THEY MAY STILL BE LOOKING FOR US WE'LL WAIT FOR THE COVER OF DARKNESS
I DON'T KNOW...
TELL THE TRUTH! DESHWITAT! YOU'VE NO REASON TO FEAR THIS GIRL!

RIGHT. BUT MAY I SLIP OUT FOR A MOMENT TO WASH?
I PROMISE TO BE CAREFUL
TELL HER! YOU'RE A VAMPIRE! A MONSTER THAT HUMANS...
...FEAR AND DESPISE!
DO AS YOU WISH.

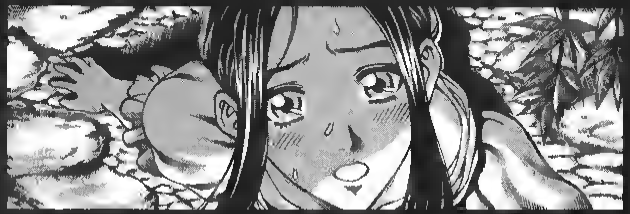
SPLENDID! I'LL JUST BE A MOMENT
타탓
.....
DAMN!
AH, THE WATER'S REFRESHING.
A TAD BRISK BUT REFRESHING.

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO DO IT
...THEN DON'T.
MMM, I MUST SAY... A FASCINATING MAN.
I WONDER IF HE HAS SOMEONE HE LOVES?
I'M SURE HE MUST— SO VIRILE AND DARKLY HANDSOME...
IF ONLY...
...HE DIDN'T...
WHAT AM I THINKING?
EK
AND TO THINK I CALLED OLGA GIDDY!

턱
GIDDY, EH?
AAIEEEE!!
WHA--?!
BLAST THAT FOOLISH GIRL!
AHHK!

...UGH!
HUFF
HUFF
AAARRGH!!

DAMN IT ALL TO HELL!!



NOT THE REACTION I'M USED TO...

YOU NEARLY BURST MY EARDRUMS

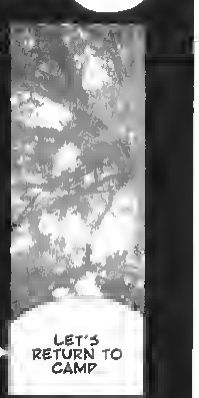
BIG LUNGS FOR SUCH A LITTLE LADY.

CAN YOU BLAME HER, RETT?
HUH?
LADY LILITH, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!

...OH?!
MAJOR... MAJOR MAYBUS?!

YES, HERE TO ESCORT YOU BACK, M'LADY PLEASE FORGIVE MY UTTER DERELICTION OF DUTY
MAY I INTRODUCE--

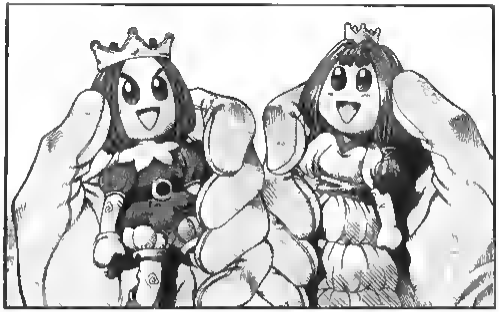
--SERGEANT RETT BUTLER! CONNOISSEUR OF BEAUTIFUL WOMEN LIKE YOURSELF
UH, THANK YOU... CHARMED, I'M SURE.
RETT, PLEASE!!

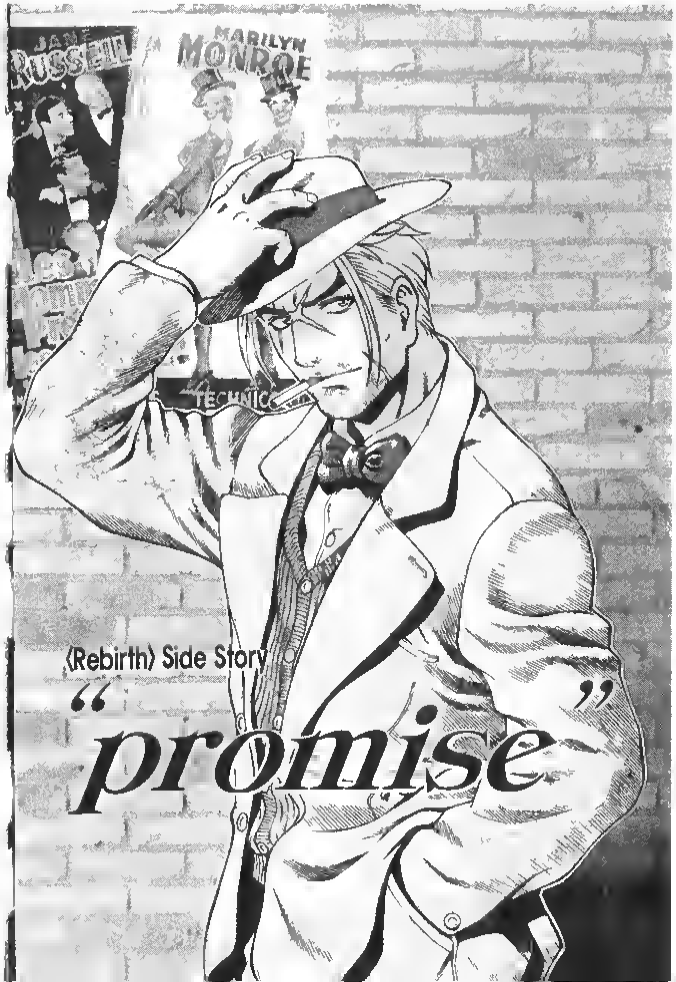

LET'S RETURN TO CAMP

YES, OF COURSE...AND ARE THOSE MEN IN YOUR COMPANY AS WELL?

MEN? I'M NOT SURE I UNDERSTA
EH?!

WELL DONE, SACRED KNIGHTS!!
NOW IF YOU DON'T MIND, WE'VE A RANSOM TO COLLECT...
TO BE CONTINUED IN REBIRTH VOL. 9!!

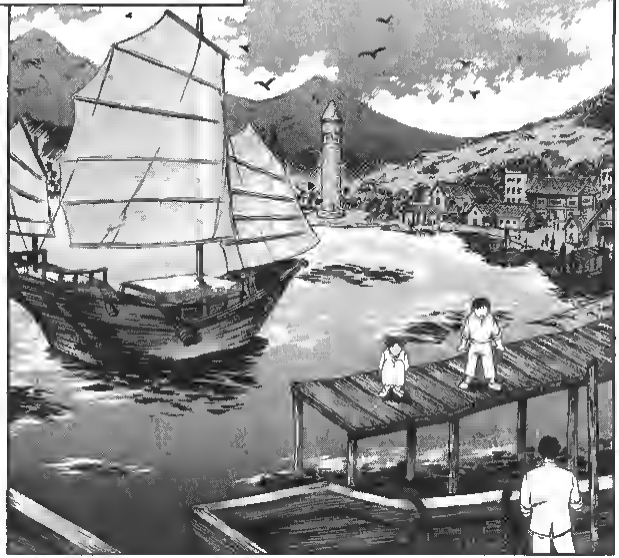


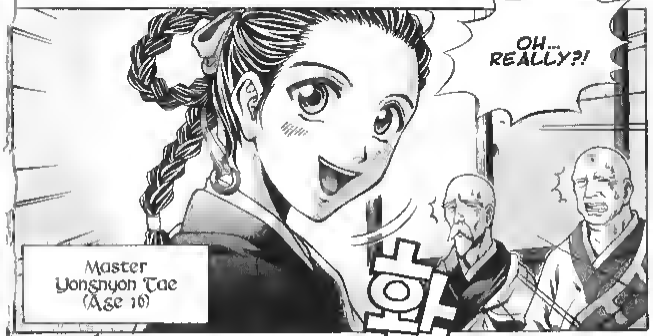


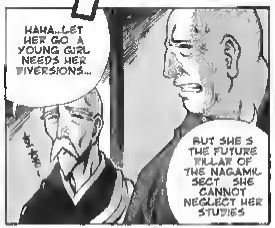
〈Rebirth〉 Side Story

“promise”

Hong Kong, 1931

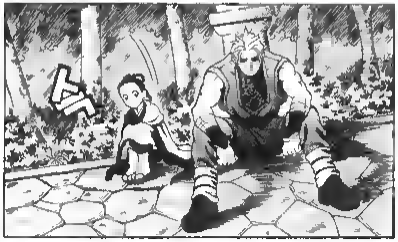






AS THE MASTER OF THE NAGAMIL SECT...
THE LIFE OF A NORMAL WOMAN WILL NEVER BE HERS.
HELLO, RETT!!
YOO-♡ HOO! RETT!
UH. RETT...?

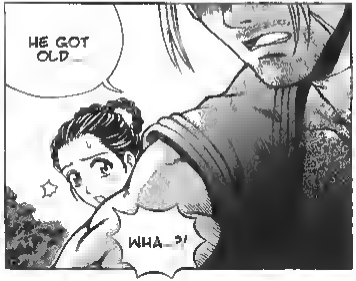
RETT

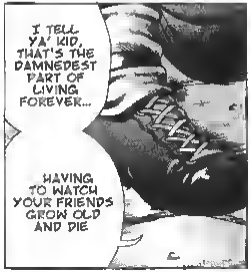


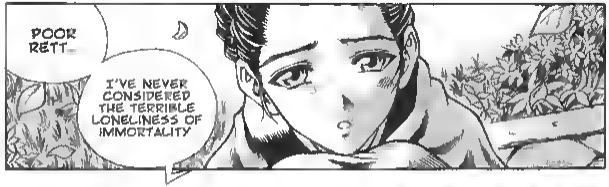
I DON'T MEAN TO INTRUDE, BUT IS SOMETHING WRONG?
꼼지락
꼼지락

SIGH

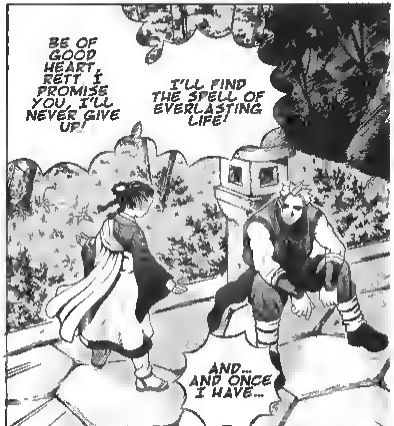
SOMEONE I CARED FOR...
IS NO LONGER WITH US...
WHAT...?! WHAT HAPPENED?!


HE GOT OLD...
WHA...?!


I TELL YA' KID, THAT'S THE DAMNEDEST PART OF LIVING FOREVER...
HAVING TO WATCH YOUR FRIENDS GROW OLD AND DIE


POOR RETT...
I'VE NEVER CONSIDERED THE TERRIBLE LONELINESS OF IMMORTALITY

I'LL JUST HAVE TO FIX THAT!
SCUSE ME?


BE OF GOOD HEART, RETT. I PROMISE YOU, I'LL NEVER GIVE UP!
I'LL FIND THE SPELL OF EVERLASTING LIFE!
AND... AND ONCE I HAVE...

..I CAN..
..LIVE FOREVER WITH MY FAVORITE PERSON IN THE WHOLE WORLD!

AND WHAT IS THAT SMILE SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!
DON'T YOU HAVE FAITH IN THE ABILITY OF THE FUTURE MASTER OF THE NAGAMIL SECT?

JUST WAIT AND SEE!
IF I CAN'T LIVE FOREVER, I'LL CREATE A BEING THAT WILL YOU'LL NEVER BE ALONE AGAIN!!

THANKS, KID..
I'LL LOOK FORWARD TO IT

..IT WAS A CHILDHOOD WISH..
BUT CHILDHOOD WISHES SELDOM COME TRUE

YEARS PASSED AS YEARS DO

EACH OF US TRYING TO DO OUR BEST WITH OUR LOT IN LIFE

WELL...

..YOU'RE LOOKING WELL, MASTER TAE KEEPING FIT?

NOW RETT, DON'T TELL ME YOU'VE FORGOTTEN MY PROMISE?

65 years later (1996)
NAMAK SARBA TADA ADA BAKNO GIJE!
OM SHAMBALA SHAMBALA HOM!
ARISE! THE PERSONIFICATION OF PERFECTION, THE IMMORTAL SOUL!!
ARISE! CHILD OF WISDOM WHO SHALL NEVER KNOW DEATH!!
ARISE AND TAKE YOUR PLACE!!
SHE'S MAGNIFICENT! IT'S A SUCCESS, MASTER TAE!!
OUR EFFORTS FOR THE LAST FIFTY YEARS HAVE FINALLY BORNE FRUIT...
CAN YOU HEAR ME...?
YOUR NAME IS BERYUN... YOU'RE A DEFENDER OF FAITH WHOM DEATH CANNOT CLAIM
DEATH...
MY DAUGHTER... AT LAST YOU TASTE THE SWEET AIR OF LIFE...

SO, MASTER TAE! I HEAR YOU'VE FINALLY SUCCEEDED?! LET'S HAVE A LOOK! BERYUN, IS IT?
HEY, SHE'S QUITE THE LOOKER!
OH, RETT...!

IT'S TRUE. BERYUN WILL NEITHER FALL ILL NOR AGE NOR DIE. SHE'S AN IMMORTAL LIFE FORCE THAT WILL GO ON FOREVER

YOU'VE REALLY OUTDONE YOURSELF! YOU'RE AMAZING!
어느덧

YONGNYON... UH, MASTER TAE

NOW I'VE KEPT...
MY PROMISE FROM LONG AGO

WELL, I MUST BE OFF
MAY YOUR TRAVELS BE SAFE, RETT

MASTER TAE, YOU KNOW SOME-THING...?
매섭

IF I COULD HAVE BROKEN A PROMISE I MADE MYSELF.. AND LOVED ONCE AGAIN...
...IT WOULD HAVE BEEN YOU...
화

OH... RETT...

MY LOVE, AND...

...MY MEMORIES WILL LAST FOREVER.

FREETALK!

MANY OF YOU MUST BE ENRAGED AT THIS SUDDEN LOVE STORY BETWEEN OUR IRREPRESSIBLE ROGUE AND A CERTAIN OLD LADY. SORRY! I WAS IMPRESSED BY THE WAY A POPULAR COMIC BOOK USES SIDE STORIES TO MAKE ITS CHARACTERS MORE WELL-ROUNDED AND INTERESTING. I'M NOT SAYING IT WAS A LAST MINUTE ATTEMPT AT IMITATION--I HAD THIS LOVE STORY IN MIND SINCE MASTER TAE'S FIRST APPEARANCE--BUT IT DID HELP ME TO SHORTEN THE PAGES AND BREATHE SOME NEW LIFE INTO THE STORY. IT'S GOING TO BE HARD TO RETURN TO THE OLD MASTER TAE AFTER SKETCHING HER YOUTHFUL SELF FOR A WHILE. I GUESS NO ONE'S IMMUNE TO THE RAVAGES OF TIME. (WELL, ALMOST NO ONE!)

END

Preview: Vol. 9

How will Rett and Kalutika possibly be able to make a stand against the likes of the savage band of bandits known as The Swamp Clan?! And what of Deshwitat? With the sun still lingering in the western sky, will he be able to come to Lady Lilith's aide in time? And if so, will even his demonic powers be enough against the combined nightmarish might of these inbred hellspawn?!

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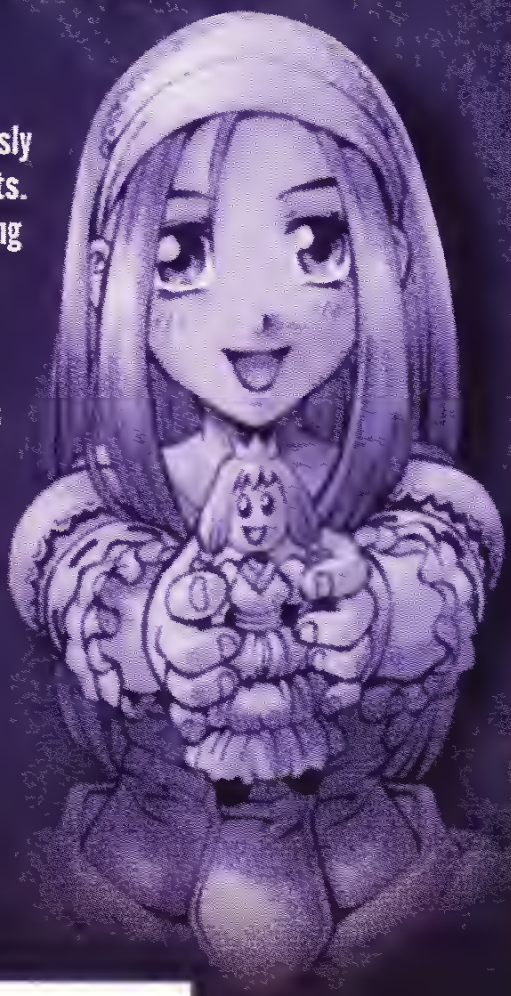

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